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The Advisor

Official Weekly Command Information Report for the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq



Yeah!

At Fort Tall Afar, Iraqi and Coalition military partners are chalking up plenty of mission successes

July 16, 2005

MNSTC-I

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Cover: Iraqi Maj. Ali, a company commander with 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division, shares a successful moment with U.S. Army Maj. Mark Brooks, a senior adviser to the battalion.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Iraqi forces on track to provide Baghdad election security, top commander says

By U.S. Army Sgt. Sara Wood

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Iraqi Security Forces in and around Baghdad are making progress in their training and will be ready to assume responsibility for security measures for the October elections, the area's top U.S. commander said July 8.

Speaking by satellite from Baghdad in a Pentagon news briefing, U.S. Army Maj. Gen. William Webster, commander of Task Force Baghdad and the 3rd Infantry Division, said two Iraqi brigades already are operating on their own in Baghdad, and two more will be operational in about two months. The remaining two brigades that will make up the Iraqi Army division in Baghdad will be ready by the elections, he added.

The plan is for the Iraqi division, made up of six brigades, along with Iraqi special police and commandos, to plan and conduct security for the elections in Baghdad, with backup from U.S. forces, he said. Iraqi forces are facing difficulties in supporting themselves logistically for long-term operations, he explained, and it will be at least spring before they are fully independent in that capacity.

Iraqi and Coalition forces have been successful at reducing the number of vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks in Baghdad, largely due to an increased presence of Iraqi forces, Webster said.

"We attribute our success to better trained and experienced Iraqi Security

Forces patrolling the streets, talking to the Iraqi people and gathering greater intelligence," he said. "The people are gaining more confidence, and they're providing them lots of information."

Since the beginning of Operation Lightning in May, the number of vehicle-borne IED attacks per week in Baghdad has been cut in half, thousands of suspects have been captured, including 51 foreign fighters, and more than 2,500 traffic-control points have been established, the general said. The insurgency in Baghdad has been suppressed to a point where political and economic progress can continue, and despite continued threats, the terrorists will not maintain a large presence there, he said.

"We don't think the enemy is capable of sustained, long-term operations against us and the Iraqi Security Forces," he said.

Defeat of the insurgency, however, is a more ambiguous concept, Webster said. The insurgents are highly adaptable enemies who are hard to keep track of, he explained.

"It's very difficult to know it's over until the Iraqi people are comfortable with the level of security that they have around them and they're able to go on with their lives in a normal way," he said.

Iraqi and Coalition forces are continually improving in their tactics against insurgents, he said, and the strength of the government and confidence of the Iraqi people prove there is hope for the future of Iraq.

"When the character of a man is not clear to you,
look at his friends."

Japanese Proverb

Iraqi Army soldiers making progress in confronting anti-Iraq forces and bonding with citizens, Coalition partners

Story and photos by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

TALL AFAR, Iraq – On the day after a suicide car bomber hit a traffic check point manned by his soldiers – killing four in uniform and several civilians – Iraqi Maj. Ahmmmed knew that words alone would not get his men back at their post.

Ahmmmed, commander of 4th Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division, told two of the battalion's Coalition advisers that his men were timid about returning to the check point. Not only did they lose comrades in the April attack, but they witnessed two sets of young children, seriously injured themselves, lose their fathers.

U.S. Army Maj. Mark Brooks, the senior adviser to the battalion, and U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Dennis Mendes, another adviser who works as a high school physics and chemistry teacher at home in Portland, Maine, spent the night of the attack at the check point's combat outpost with the men. When Ahmmmed told Brooks of his men's hesitation the next morning, Brooks recalled telling him that if the soldiers did not return to the check point, then he and Mendes would go out there and work it alone.

Ahmmmed told the advisers to stay at the outpost and let him handle the situation. Without a word, Ahmmmed donned his



An Iraqi soldier hands a young boy a bottle of water during a patrol through a village near Tall Afar.

gear and walked out to the check point. He stood there, alone, for several minutes. It wasn't long before his men slung on their gear and joined him.

"You didn't have to speak Arabic to understand what was going on. He couldn't tell them, he had to show them," Brooks said. "It was the best example of leadership in the Iraqi Army I've seen yet."

Modest start

Brooks and the adviser support team he leads have lived and worked with the 1st Battalion at Fort Tall Afar for the past eight months. Built by British forces in the 1930s, the fort was used as a prison during Saddam Hussein's regime. Home to the 1st Battalion since last year, the fort also houses some Coalition forces, such as Heavy Company of the 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Combat Regiment. The 3rd ACR oversees the area of operations that encompasses the fort.

Iraqi Col. Farhey, the battalion commander, had close to 50 soldiers and officers when the team arrived in December.



At a combat outpost near Tall Afar, Iraqi soldiers operate a traffic check point.

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Tall Afar

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More than 500 now fill four line companies and a headquarters company that includes transportation and maintenance elements. The battalion also operates its own personnel, intelligence and logistics sections.

"They've really come a long way," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Corey Emmons, an adviser from Gray, Maine, who works for the Department of Homeland Security in his civilian life. "Food, resupplies, trash – they take care of themselves. Logistically, they're among the most organized I've seen."

For the first four months after the advisers arrived, all of the missions were conducted jointly with the Iraqi soldiers, Brooks said. In between missions, there were training classes – weapons, cordons and knocks, hand grenades, noncommissioned officer development. Adviser medics U.S. Navy Senior Chief Corpsman Reggie Dean and U.S. Army Sgt. Marty Perez have also conducting classes; the battalion now has 15 soldiers trained and certified as combat life savers who run the clinic's daily sick call and accompany units on missions.

Independent operations

But for the past three months, the Iraqis have been doing their own combat operations. They operate in open and unarmored UAZ jeeps. A typical day includes two operations – reconnaissance patrols, dismounted presence patrols, or cordon and searches. They usually go out on a major operation once a week.

In addition, the battalion conducts three traffic route sweeps every day in and around the city of Tall Afar. Soldiers man a handful of combat outposts in the area 24-hours-a-day, with groups rotating in and out a few days at a time or longer. Hot meals are delivered by Iraqi convoys from the fort three times a day.



During a presence patrol through a village near Tall Afar, soldiers put up posters about the new Iraqi Army and explaining how citizens can help support their soldiers.

The meal deliveries are an example of Iraqi leaders deciding what's best for them and their men, Brooks said. In an American unit, soldiers would

probably get two Meals Ready to Eat and one hot meal a day. Brooks advised against the multiple runs, noting the increased exposure to danger. Farhey countered that if the Iraqis are going to 'get into the fight,' they can't avoid the

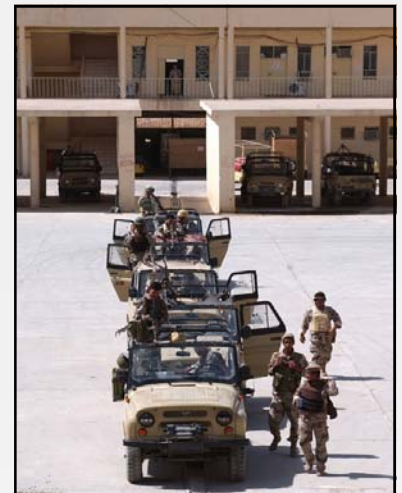


On a mission to check out possible polling sites for October's election, Iraqi soldiers handed out toys and school supplies to village families.

possibility of danger, Brooks recalled. The hot meals are also an important morale issue for his men, the colonel decided.

A few weeks ago, one of the meal convoys was hit by an improvised explosive device. Two Iraqi soldiers were killed, 11 were wounded.

Battalion leaders weren't always ready and willing to be so bold, Brooks said. On Christmas Eve, the fort was hit by mortars. Brooks recalled a conversation with a battalion officer, who was inclined to stay in the fort when Brooks suggested they should make an attempt to get out and hunt the attackers. Brooks told him a bully will continue to throw punches if he isn't confronted.



1st Battalion soldiers gather a convoy for a mission near Tall Afar.

The officer asked if the advisers would go out with them. Absolutely, Brooks said. By the sixth mortar attack weeks later, the Iraqi leaders and their soldiers were beating the advisers out the front gate in pursuit of the attackers, Brooks said.

"One thing we've worked hard on is developing a battalion that's capable, efficient and effective," said U.S. Army Master Sgt. Norman Brown, an adviser who works back home as a corrections facility warden in Coos County, New Hampshire. "They're brave and they're proud. A little bit of encouragement goes a long way. There are still lessons to be learned, but that comes with time and experience."

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From a combat outpost near Tall Afar, a 1st Battalion soldier scans the area for suspicious activity.

Tall Afar

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One recent mission the soldiers conducted jointly sent them into four local villages, where they scoped out possible locations for the October election on the proposed constitution. The Iraqis used it as an opportunity to spread goodwill, by passing out school supplies and toys for children. They also passed out information about the Iraqi Army, and how residents can help them fight terrorists.

Farhey and Brooks later deemed it a success. Four buildings were identified as locations. The officers were also buoyed by the fact that two villages have largely Sunni populations.



A village resident reads over a sign advertising a number to call in information about insurgent activity. He joked with Iraqi soldiers that he would be happy to call them if they would give him a mobile phone.

Areas of improvement

One area Brown and others identify as needing continued work is the development of a strong NCO corps. In the former Iraqi Army, NCOs were treated like regular soldiers, with officers assuming all leadership responsibilities. They are gradually building a system that utilizes NCOs as the backbone on their Army, much like their Coalition partners.

"It's hard for the officers to let go of control," said U.S. Army

Sgt. 1st Class Martin Bailey, another adviser "But they're learning."

Bailey believes in giving the Iraqis he works with plenty of leeway in handling situations, even if they steer in a direction he wouldn't go.

"Sometimes you have to fail to succeed," Bailey said. "One thing we try not to do is embarrass anyone in front of other people."

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. David Daily, an adviser from Saco, Maine, agrees.

"The bully approach may work in some situations, but you'll never get their respect," Daily said.

The adviser team, which also includes U.S. Army Master Sgt. Alfred Seydler, has worked by trial and error to figure out what works. Daily starts his training classes by explaining how he and other U.S. Soldiers would do something. Then he asks the Iraqis to show him how they do it.

"Then we figure it out together," Daily said. "I didn't come in here saying this is how we're going to do it because some manual says so. That doesn't work here."

Detainee interviewing

While accidental weapon discharges were an initial problem, advisers said that issue is largely under control. Proper treatment of detainees is another work in progress. Since December, U.S. Army 1st Lt. Byron Barton, another adviser, has overseen the interrogation of more than 400 detainees. When the IED hit the chow run convoy, Farhey and his men went into the nearest neighborhood to root out the culprits. Residents wouldn't talk, so Farhey hauled in all of the military-aged men for interrogations. In one 24-hour period, advisers and their Iraqi counterparts interviewed 277 men, Brooks said.



1st Battalion Commander Iraqi Col. Farhey uses a Global Positioning System while inspecting a building in a village near Tall Afar as a possible polling site for upcoming elections.

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"They caught the targets and intelligence from the interviews led to two raids later that night," Brooks said.

"They sent the bad guys to Al Kasik. The good guys got water, meals and a ride back from the fort."

Shortly after, one man who was released brought back information on the location of three IEDs. He ended up getting a \$1,000 reward, Brooks said.

Greatest strengths

Brooks and other advisers heap plenty of praise on the battalion, but others are equally impressed. Capt. Greg Mitchell, Heavy Company commander, is on his second tour in Iraq. In the first tour, he was a staff officer with a government support team in Fallujah. The progress he's seen in the Iraqi Security Forces since then is tremendous, Mitchell said.

"This battalion is undoubtedly one of the best in Tall Afar," Mitchell said. "It can maneuver on its own without American support. If it's going to take control of the city, they'll require more training and assistance, but they've made great progress."

One area Mitchell sees as a weak spot for the battalion is



On a dismounted presence patrol through a village near Tall Afar, an Iraqi officer and a resident share a pleasant exchange.

equipment. They need armor to properly fight in the city, he believes. Their greatest strength is their patriotism and their hunger for democracy, Mitchell said.

"They come from all backgrounds and they all want it," he said. "They won't let go of that idea."

It wasn't all that long ago that Farhey, the battalion commander, struggled to keep the battalion whole. When it was organized in April 2004 as the 10th Battalion, an Australian team was in charge of training. There were close to 1,000 soldiers by August, when a man wearing an explosive vest walked into the dining facility at Al Kasik and blew the place up. Nine soldiers were killed, 23 wounded, Farhey said.

"That was new to them, they had never seen anything like that happen," Farhey said, through an interpreter.

"A lot of soldiers left after that."

A few months later, what was left of the battalion headed into Mosul for heavy fighting. Farhey counts the mission as successful, but more soldiers decided the army wasn't for them and left.

Farhey was in a staff position at the division at the time. He was sent to Fort Tall Afar in December to take over as battalion commander. He had less than 50 soldiers and three officers. Soldiers transferring from other battalions and new recruits helped build up the numbers. The training and sense of purpose also helped in keeping soldiers with the battalion.

"With the help of the American ASTs, we've built the battalion step by step," Farhey said. "We've built good relationships between the officers and soldiers."

Farhey insists his officers lead from the front. "When the soldier sees an officer leading, he feels stronger and his morale is higher," he said.

Building morale, trust

The operational tempo and variety of missions has also played a big role in sharpening the soldiers' skills and



An Iraqi soldier takes a break from a patrol to chat with village boys.

boosting morale, Farhey said.

"At first, they were very scared," Farhey said. "But now, they are not happy if they are not engaging. When there is a conflict, they stay strong. There is no more running away."

The soldiers also believe in what they're doing, Farhey said. There are some that join the Army simply for the money, but they don't last long, he said.

"They believe in fighting the terrorists, that it is their responsibilities," Farhey said. "When they hear about what the terrorists are doing, it's like a dagger hitting their chest."

Farhey also sees a shift in how both Iraqi civilians and soldiers view Americans.

"The problem at first was that people did not believe the Americans came over here to help them. They thought there had to be another reason," Farhey said. "But now the Iraqi people feel Americans want to help Iraq. They see that they are working hard for us."

Ties that bind

Farhey and Brooks share a close, comfortable relationship, as do the other advisers with their Iraqi counterparts. They learned early on that in this culture, relationships are paramount.

At dinner one night, Farhey shared with Brooks a radio conversation he had with a soldier who was on duty at one of the combat outposts. The soldier called Farhey to tell him that his baby was very sad. Farhey, alarmed, thought something was wrong at the soldier's home. When Farhey asked why, the soldier replied that his 'baby' wasn't getting to shoot any terrorists.

The officers shared a laugh, with Brooks shaking his head in amazement over the young soldier's nerve in calling his battalion commander the way he did.

Farhey shared another story, of a radio conversation he overheard between two soldiers on duty at outposts. One soldier tells the other that he doesn't want to die at the outpost. The other asks why. The first soldier says he has a beautiful little daughter that he worries about.

"Don't worry," the second soldier replied. "I'll marry her to my son if anything happens."

The advisers cemented their bonds with battalion leaders and soldiers in the aftermath of the car bomb that killed four soldiers at the traffic check point in April. One of the ESS contract workers, Jamal, approached Brooks about how the bodies would be returned to the families, many of whom traveled long distances to the fort, to take their sons home.

It wasn't acceptable for the soldiers to be handed over in body bags, Jamal said. They had to be in wood coffins. Brooks and the ASTs went to work, constructing four coffins. They organized a detail soldiers to carry each coffin – draped in Iraq's flag – to their respective family's vehicle. The U.S. and Iraqi soldiers stood in formation and saluted as each passed by. Brooks personally extended condolences to each family and thanked them for their son's service and sacrifice.

"They know that no matter what, we're here shoulder to shoulder with them," Brown said. "That makes a difference."

Brooks and others marvel at how close they've become with the Iraqi soldiers.

"I have a daughter who was born since I've been gone, and I can't wait to get home," Brooks said. "But at the same time, I'm really going to miss these guys."

Daily went home recently for two weeks of leave. While he was gone, Ahmmed, the 4th Company commander, emailed him to say hello and that he missed him.

When Daily returned, his company was out on an extended rotation at one of the combat outposts. On the night they were expected to return, Daily waited up until well past midnight – even though he had to be up at 6 a.m. the next morning – to welcome them back.

Farhey knows the day will come when the Americans will be gone. The advisers he's grown so close to are preparing to rotate home; they will be replaced by another team. That's the nature of the military, no matter what country it serves, Farhey noted.

"We will remember the good things," he said. "And one day, when Iraq is free of terrorists, they will come back with their families to visit."

"We will look for them then."



Iraqi soldiers, in Jeeps and on foot, make their way through a village on a presence patrol. Children and livestock often trailed behind.

New Iraqi Airmen stage first operational airlift mission

By U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Brian Davidson

447th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

NEW AL MUTHANA AIR BASE, Iraq – Airmen representing the new Iraqi Air Force have successfully executed the first operational airlift mission since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime.

The mission not only marks a great accomplishment for the emerging Iraqi Air Force, but it also directly supports the protection of Iraq's power grid.

"The mission, dubbed 'Operation Iraqi Power,' while simple in nature and tactical in design, directly supports a complicated strategic plan to stabilize Iraq," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. James McClellan, the new Al Muthana Air Base U.S. commander, who is deployed from the 49th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. "At first glance, moving some cargo isn't a big deal since it occurs every day. However, this operation is filled with firsts— it's the first time the Iraqi Air Force Aerial Transporters have prepared cargo without significant U.S. assistance, and it's the first time new Al Muthana Air Base has been used to stage an operational mission."

The mission began when the Ministry of Electricity put in an airlift request to move 2,700 AK-47 assault rifles and one million rounds of ammunition from Baghdad to Basrah. The weapons and ammunition will be used by the Ministry's Energy, Pipeline Security Services to protect Iraq's energy distribution system from insurgent attacks.

That request was the catalyst for Operation Iraqi Power.

A five-chalk operation

Working from a base that still shows battle scars from Operation Desert Storm and the 2003 invasion that finally toppled Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi airmen began processing and palletizing the weapons and ammunition for airlift.

In a little under five days, everything was ready and the first Iraqi Air Force C-130 to fly this operation sat ready for loading. It would take five chalks to complete the operation.

Although the Iraqi Aerial Port airmen have been trained in airlift operations, their success was directly tied to the support of the men and women of the 447th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron.

"They have been involved since the start with planning assistance and the use of critical material handling equipment," their efforts ensured the success of this operation," said U.S. Air Force Col. Daniel Kornacki, 447 Air Expeditionary Group commander, who is deployed from his position as the vice commander of the 94th Airlift Wing at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.



Iraqi C-130 cargo planes were instrumental in the recent 'Operation Iraqi Power' airlift mission.

MNSTC-I file photo

To help prepare the Iraqi airmen to take over airlift missions, and ultimately function as a modern equivalent to Air Mobility Command, the Multi-National Security Training Command-Iraq is helping rebuild Al Muthana Air Base, in training airmen and establishing a chain of command in keeping with Iraqi military tradition.

Need for youth

In command of the wing and the men of the 23 Squadron is Iraqi Brig. Gen. Abood. He goes by the title Brigadier, and was once a pilot under the command of Saddam Hussein.

While Brigadier is proud of the accomplishments of his men, he is still somewhat pessimistic about Iraq's future. "What we need most are younger men to train and learn to take command of the new Iraqi military," he said. "There are too many senior officers from the old regime in today's service and they try to do things the old way."

Brigadier says he will do what he can for the next three years, but then intends to end his military career to make room for younger officers. He still laments over the hundreds of aircraft that were sent to Iran during Desert Storm, but were never returned to Iraq. We are starting from zero – and we have a long way to go," he said.

While Brigadier is unsure about what the next few years hold, some of his troops are more optimistic.

That optimism is reflected in the stories of men who suffered under Saddam Hussein, but are now dedicated to building a free Iraq. One such story tells of a new Iraqi airman who was a fighter pilot during the Iran-Iraq war. While flying a mission into Iran, he refused orders to fire on a school house. Immediately upon landing back in Iraq, he was arrested, and spent nearly 15 years in prison – finally

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Royal Marine posts as MNSTC-I's deputy commander

By U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – For his second tour in Iraq, British Brig. Jeremy Robbins is looking forward to having a role in rebuilding Iraq's Security Forces.



British Brig. Jeremy Robbins, a Royal Marine, is MNSTC-I's new deputy commander.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Robbins, a Royal Marine who was with the 3rd Commando Brigade before redeploying for this tour, was the senior British land adviser to the Combined Forces Land Component Command from January through May 2003.

"This will be different," Robbins says of his new position. "In 2003, the immediate focus was on war fighting and the initial stages of transition. Now, we're very much in the business of partnership with the Iraqis and developing their capabilities, while at the same time conducting

counter-insurgency operations."

Robbins steps into job British Brig. David Clements has filled for the past eight months. Clements departed last week for a new position as commandant of the School of Infantry at Catterick, England – the British equivalent of the U.S. Army's Fort Benning, Ga.

Clements will also have responsibility for the Infantry Battle School in Wales, which is similar to the U.S. Army's Ranger school. The school currently has 24 instructors from the Iraqi Military Academy at Ar Rustamiyah in attendance, which Clements believes will help him feel a connection to Iraq.

His tour was an amazing ride, Clements said.

"It's only when you stop and reflect that you realize just how much has been achieved," he said. "I believe I'll feel the most satisfaction from having a part in developing the concept of a partnership with the Iraqi forces. Everywhere we have a partnership, we've had progress."

Clements recalls arriving just as the battle of Fallujah was kicking off last November. Everyone held their breath, he said, and didn't really start to exhale until the success of the January elections.

"I don't think anyone who was in Iraq on election day will ever forget it," Clements said. "Since then, no Iraqi unit has failed in its mission. There's still a big job to do, though."

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Iraqi Power

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liberated when Coalition forces invaded at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

While there is a long way to go until the new Iraqi Air Force is ready to stand on its own, airmen like these are thankful for the help the Coalition is offering.

"This is a fresh start for the Iraqi Air Force, and these men have trained hard," said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. John Spry. Deployed from the 49th Material Maintenance Support Squadron, Holloman Air Force Base,

N.M., Spry is serving as a member of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team for MNSTC-I.

"Operation Iraqi Power is offering them their first opportunity to take another step towards freedom and security for their families."

Most of the men accomplishing this historic mission are thankful for the chance to help develop an Air Force to be proud of, despite constant threats from insurgents—threats against their lives and even their families.

For these airmen, and their comrades serving in other areas of the new Iraqi military, the price of free-

dom is high—but it's a price they are willing to pay for the sake of their children.

One such dedicated airman, Iraqi Warrant Officer Hasen, paused while preparing cargo for shipment, and struggled to find the words in English to express his thoughts. "I thank my American teachers, and all Americans who (are) helping us," he said. "They leave everything behind—their home, their family, their children—to come bring freedom. We will tell our children, and they (will) tell (the) next generation—that you helped build (a) new (Iraqi) Air Force. I tell your family—they can be proud of you. Thank you. Thank you."



British Brig. David Clements departs MNSTC-I to take command of the School of Infantry at Catterick, England.

Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Robbins

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Clements sees the next phase of MNSTC-I's job as helping Iraqi Security Forces in developing their logistics capabilities so they can have a sustainable force.

Robbins, who joined the Royal Marines in 1978, is enthusiastic about being a part of the effort. With a variety of staff operational appointments on his resume and service as chief of staff of a two-star battle staff, Robbins believes his staff skills will benefit both the MNSTC-I team and Iraqi partners.

"I'm committed to seeing the job we started in 2003 seen through," Robbins said.

**Your equipment
can't save your
life if it's not
turned on.**



STAY ALIVE

0009

IEDs KILL

Did you know?

Iraq's Islamic Past



Islamic forays into Iraq began during the reign of Abu Bakr (632-634), the first caliph and the father-in-law of Prophet Mohammad. In 750, Abo al Abbas was established in Baghdad as the first caliph of the Abbasid dynasty. The Abbacies, whose line was called "the blessed dynasty" by its supporters, presented themselves to the people as divine-right rulers who would initiate a new era of justice and prosperity. Their political policies were, however, remarkably similar to those of the Umayyads. And in 762, the capital city of Baghdad was founded.

In the eighth century, the Abbasid caliphate established its capital at Baghdad, which became an important commercial, cultural, and a famous center of learning in the Middle Ages, and was regarded in the tenth century, the intellectual center of the world. As capital of the caliphate, Baghdad was also to become the cultural capital of the Islamic world.

Baghdad became a center of power in the world, where Arab and Persian cultures mingled to produce a blaze of philosophical, scientific, and literary glory. This era is remembered throughout the Arab world and by the Iraqis in particular, as the pinnacle of the Islamic past.

Within fifty years the population outgrew the city walls as people thronged to the capital to become part of the Abbacies' enormous bureaucracy or to engage in trade. Baghdad became a vast emporium of trade linking Asia and the Mediterranean. By 806, Baghdad was second in size only to Constantinople.

- Information provided by http://arabic-media.com/iraq_history.htm

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Soldiers find refrigerated rockets

BALAD – Iraqi and Coalition troops conducting Operation “Cobra Strike” recovered a weapons cache in the refrigerator of a home they searched July 8.

Soldiers with the 4th Iraqi Army Battalion and a Coalition Task Force found 24 60mm mortar rounds in the appliance, along with two rocket-propelled grenades elsewhere in the home, located about three kilometers southwest of Balad.

A second cache was discovered in a nearby field, consisting of 13 82mm rounds and 15 cans of ammunition. A search of another field yielded a third cache of three rocket-propelled grenades, an RPG launcher and three fuses.

An explosive ordnance disposal team was brought in to destroy the caches.

Joint operation nets two dozen suspects

SARABADI – A joint cordon and search operation known as “Operation Fishnet II” brought 25 suspected insurgents into custody and recovered numerous weapons.

The July 8 operation involved soldiers with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Iraqi Army Brigade; the 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division; and Coalition forces.

Confiscated weapons included a

Mercedes with a rocket-propelled grenade and a sniper rifle inside; three rocket-propelled grenades with rounds; two machine guns, with 300 rounds; 21 AK-47 automatic assault rifles, 150 rounds of ammunition and 20 magazines; two English rifles; six hand grenades; a signal pistol with one round; and two sniper rifles.

An Iraqi Police battalion from Al Kut also participated in the operation, capturing 17 of the suspects and 13 rifles, two AK-47s and two machine guns.

Combined operation scores large cache

KIFRI – Coalition and Iraqi forces conducting a joint operation discovered a large cache of mortar and artillery rounds July 9.

The cache included 20 250-pound bombs; officials said such bombs have previously been recovered one or two at a time.

The Iraqi forces involved were with the 3rd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division. Coalition soldiers with the 2nd Squadron, 278th Cavalry Regiment also participated in the operation.

Operations lead Iraqi forces to suspects

BAGHDAD – Iraqi forces captured two suspected insurgents on a list of wanted individuals July 9 while conducting independent operations in the city.

Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and the 4th Public Order Battalion worked together on the operation.

Combined operations between Iraqi and Coalition forces July 9 led to the detainment of 10 people suspected of being involved in improvised explosive device attacks.

Iraqi Police nab man emplacing IED

MUSAYYIB – Iraqi Police here caught a man trying to plant an improvised explosive device July 9. As the police officers went after the man, he threw the IED – a propane bottle with electrical tape, battery box and a light attached to it – into a hole surrounded by concrete. Police took the man into custody while Coalition forces verified the IED. An explosive ordnance disposal team removed the device.

Soldiers hear plots, capture suspects

MOSUL – Iraqi soldiers on a routine security patrol took four men into custody July 9 after hearing them plotting attacks against Coalition forces. The soldiers belong to the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade of the 3rd Iraqi Army Division.

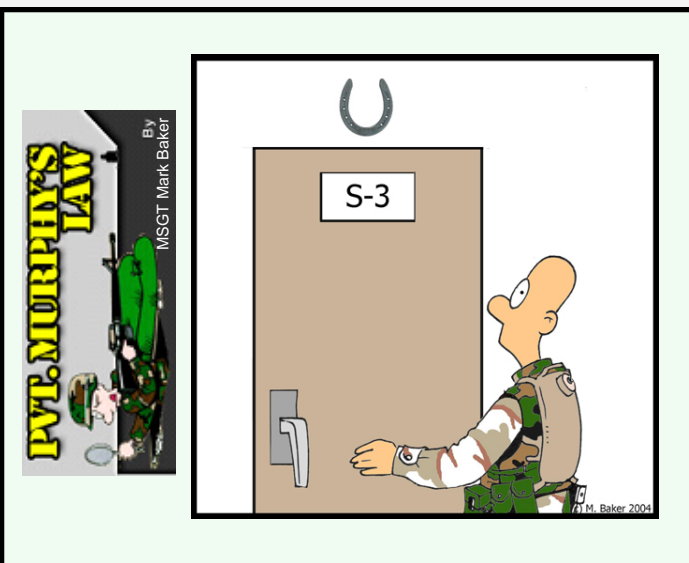
Operation continues, attacks down

BAGHDAD – Iraqi forces continue their assault on enemy forces in Operation Al Barkh (Lightning), with officials noting a 10 percent reduction in attacks on Iraqi and Coalition troops in the past week.

In the same time frame, forces with the Iraqi Army's 6th Division have captured eight suspected insurgents – seven identified as Egyptian and one Indian; dismantled two terrorist cells; recovered a dump truck modified to serve as a mobile rocket launcher and a van set up as a sniper firing platform.

Iraqi Police detain target in drag

MOSUL – Iraqi Police captured the head of an insurgent cell known for beheadings and another high-value target while conducting a cordon and search mission July 11. At the time of the cell head's capture, he was dressed in women's clothing, according to a multinational forces report.



Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi forces locate, disarm explosive

KIRKUK – Based on a tip from a local citizen, the Meghdad police responded and located an explosive device July 6. The police cleared the area and Iraqi Army soldiers successfully disarmed the device. (Task Force Liberty Public Affairs)

Chairman speaks out

SAMARRA – The Samarra City Council Chairman, Sheik Taha Hassen Jasim, denounced terrorism in a radio message he recorded July 7. He also addressed other issues concerning the city of Samarra, such as support for the upcoming elections, funding requests and other Iraqi governmental support. (Task Force Liberty Public Affairs)

ISF blunt attack, capture suspects

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Special Police thwarted a possible terrorist attack against the Kuwaiti Embassy July 9.

Shortly before 8 a.m., Iraqi Special Police guarding the embassy in central Baghdad saw a rocket-propelled grenade round placed near the building's southeast entrance. An explosives ordnance disposal team was called to the site to safely remove the round.

In combat operations, Iraqi soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division conducted an operation in Abu Ghraib to seize illegal weapons, bomb making materials and disrupt terrorist activities in the area.

The Iraqi soldiers searched house to house for nearly five hours and detained five terror suspects. Additionally, the soldiers found anti-Coalition propaganda and confiscated a car whose trunk was covered in blood.

Iraqi soldiers also detained a terrorist wanted by both the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior while searching a business district in central Baghdad.

At around 4:30 p.m. an Iraqi citizen walked up to the gate of a U.S. mili-

tary base in southeast Baghdad and told Soldiers he'd found some unexploded munitions.

The Iraqi man led Soldiers to the site and showed them four 122mm explosive rounds. A team of explosives experts safely detonated the munitions. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Iraqi citizens turn tables on terrorists

BAGHDAD – East Baghdad residents came forward in two separate incidents July 8 to report suspicious activities.

In the first incident, a local citizen observed terrorists emplacing a roadside bomb and reported it to Iraqi Police. The IPs responded, cordoned off the area and coordinated with the 720th Military Police Battalion and a Coalition explosive ordnance disposal team to disable the bomb, which consisted of a 125mm tank round connected to a remote controlled device.

The second incident occurred when an Iraqi civilian provided information on an illegal weapons dealer. Elements of 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, responded and captured the weapons dealer, who possessed a sniper rifle, a sub-machine gun and three AK-47 rifles. (2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

Iraqi Army captures 12 attackers

BAGHDAD – Iraqi soldiers responding to a small arms attack July 5 detained 12 of their attackers, one of whom was identified as a known bomb manufac-

turer. The soldiers, of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, were patrolling in Abu Ghraib when they were attacked.

Earlier that day, an Iraqi Army unit working in north Baghdad caught a terror suspect known to have served in an army chemical weapons unit under the old regime. The suspect had compact discs with anti-Iraqi forces propaganda in his possession.

Later, an Iraqi citizen told Task Force Baghdad Soldiers he'd seen three men digging holes in the vicinity of a subsequent roadside bomb attack against Coalition forces. The man offered to lead the patrol to the attackers' houses and identify the men. Just before midnight, the Soldiers searched two houses in the Risalah district of south Baghdad and captured three men the Iraqi citizen identified as the men he had seen placing the bombs. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Looking back

One year ago in Iraq

Brig. Gen. Jovito Talparan, the head of the Philippines' forces in Iraq, and 10 members arrived Saturday in Kuwait and would continue to Manila Sunday, Foreign Affairs Secretary Delia Albert said.

The Philippines recalled Talparan Friday, July 16, 2004, as it continues to remove personnel from Iraq to comply with the demands of kidnappers holding a Philippine truck driver hostage.

The troops, comprising what the Philippines government says is strictly a humanitarian contingent, originally numbered 51.

On Wednesday, Albert said in a written statement that some members had already left Iraq. With the Talparan-headed group gone, 32 members of the Filipino contingent remain.

The government's statement said the others will leave the country shortly.

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Local citizen turns in weapons cache to patrol
BAGHDAD – A Zafaraniya resident reported the location of two 155-millimeter artillery rounds to a patrol from 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division July 7.

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Terry J. Rivera, the patrol leader, immediately recognized the artillery rounds as the same type used by terrorists to make improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne IEDs.

Rivera cordoned off the area for the safety of the local population and requested assistance from a Coalition explosive ordnance disposal team. The EOD team conducted a controlled detonation of the 100-pound rounds with no damage to local property or residents.

“The Iraqi people know that the insurgents are the enemy and endangering the lives of innocent civilians,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Steven Merkel. “Their willingness to help shows great promise for the future of Iraq.”

In the past two months, the Iraqi 2nd Public Order Brigade, along with 1-9 FA, conducted eight joint operations targeting anti-Iraq forces. Military officials said that while these operations produced some immediate results, the long-term effects are just now beginning to be felt.

“The residents of Zafaraniya are emboldened by the success of recent operations,” said Merkel. (2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

Operation Muthana Strike nets 100 terrorists

BAGHDAD – At least 100 suspected terrorists were detained during Operation Muthana Strike, launched by Iraqi Army and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers in the early-morning hours of July 4.

The operation, which was based on credible information from local residents’ tips, targeted terrorist safe houses in the neighborhoods adjacent to the west side of Baghdad International Airport. Task Force Baghdad officials said the raids involved about 600 Iraqi soldiers and 250 U.S. Soldiers.

The operation was designed to detain suspected terrorists, seize illegal weapons and gain actionable intelligence in order to disrupt future AIF operations.

IA forces conducted cordon-and-search operations in order to prevent anti-Iraq forces from escaping through the secure perimeter soldiers drew around the area.

“This operation was led by the Iraqi Army,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Mark London, operations officers with the 48th Brigade Combat Team. “I was very impressed with the way they got out there and handled their business.”

The operation, which concluded around 9:30 a.m., resulted in the detention of more than 100 suspected terror-

Iraqi equipment roll-up

A look at some of the equipment delivered to the Iraqi Security Forces July 3 — July 9

Ammunition.....	1.9 million rounds
AK-47s.....	8,100
Handguns.....	1,400
Chevy LUVs.....	20
UAZ Jeeps.....	71
Ambulances.....	27

— Information provided by MNSTC-I J-4

ists, some of whom were foreign fighters, including individuals from Egypt.

“The success of the Iraqi Army demonstrates their level of training and high commitment to rid Iraq of terrorists,” said U.S. Army Col. Kenneth Roberts, 48th Brigade Combat Team executive officer. “I am proud of our Iraqi counterparts – they are well-led and well-trained. I congratulate them on their successful operation.” (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Elections held in Tikrit, Ad Duluiyah

TIKRIT – City residents took part in the first election of their city council June 29. The Tikrit leadership planned and executed the Qada elections without incident, further demonstrating their ability to function without Coalition aid, officials said.

Meanwhile, more than 21,000 voters turned out at 16 polling stations in Ad Duluiyah to elect their city council members July 2. Iraqi Police and Army soldiers provided security.

Iraqi Army leads offensive against terrorist safe-houses

BAGHDAD – Iraqi soldiers from 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army and Coalition forces teamed up to conduct offensive operations against terrorist safe havens on the west side of Baghdad International Airport.

The operation took place July 4 in order to stop terrorists from victimizing innocent Iraqi citizens living in the area.

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Police thwart car bomb attack

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Police patrolling in the Ghazaliyah area stopped a suspected vehicle-borne improvised explosive device carrying three suspected terrorists July 7.

After police officers secured the site around the car, the vehicle ran past police barriers and into a nearby police compound. Officers opened fire on the vehicle, killing all three occupants before they could detonate the car bomb. One compound guard reported he'd seen one of the terrorists trying to trigger a detonation device before being shot.

Upon closer inspection of the vehicle, officers discovered four 55-gallon drums containing 600 pounds of homemade explosives connected to the car battery. (256th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

Soldiers nab dozens of terrorists

YUSUFYAH – Task Force Baghdad officials say they have detained as many as 40 suspected terrorists after a joint patrol of Iraqi Army and U.S. Army Soldiers came under fire July 3 in an area south of Yusufiyah.

Five Iraqi soldiers were killed in the terrorist attack and three were wounded; three local nationals were also wounded. There was no report of U.S. casualties.

The attack began when the patrol struck an improvised explosive device, then came under small-arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire. Iraqi Army and Task Force Baghdad forces responded with air, armor and ground forces which assaulted the location identified as the source of fire.

Iraqi Army and U.S. forces then cordoned a two-square-mile area looking for the attackers, resulting in the arrest of 35-40 suspected terrorists. (48th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

Iraqi tip leads to bomb

BAGHDAD – An Iraqi citizen's tip helped Task Force Baghdad Soldiers find and disarm a roadside bomb in east Baghdad before terrorists could use it.

The citizen told the Soldiers he'd seen a five-gallon gas can lying in the median of a major highway July 2. Upon arriving at the site, the unit blocked traffic, cleared the area to prevent anyone from getting hurt and called in a team of explosives experts. The team investigated, found a 122-millimeter mortar round wired to a radio, and safely detonated the bomb.

Iraqi citizens continue to be proactive by assisting Iraqi Security Forces in policing their local areas, said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Michael Johnson, commander of 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

As an example, Johnson pointed out the fact that an Iraqi citizen identified a suspicious vehicle July 2 and alerted local Iraqi Police. The IPs, working with other Iraqi Security Forces, disarmed what turned out to be a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Iraqi Police respond to car attack

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Police stood firm in the face of a car bomb attack on one of their east Baghdad police stations July 2.

Two Iraqi citizens were killed and five civilians were wounded when the car bomb was remotely detonated near the station. Two police officers were also injured in the attack.

Police secured the scene immediately after the attack to prevent anyone else from getting hurt, and began evacuating the injured people to a local hospital. The attack caused no damage to the police station, or to any other buildings and vehicles in the area.

"I am disgusted by the continuing acts of violence against our people and our communities," said one Iraqi police officer. "The people have already made the choice; they want freedom. The terrorists must know that with every cowardly act they commit, the people grow more and more supportive of the Iraqi government and the road to democracy." (2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

Three terrorists killed by forces

MOSUL – Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition forces from Task Force Freedom killed three terrorists, detained 11 suspected terrorists, and seized weapons during operations in northern Iraq July 7 and 9.

A tip from an Iraqi citizen led troops from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division Iraqi Army to three individuals suspected of terrorist activity during a cordon and search operation outside Mosul July 7. Suspects are in custody with no ISF injuries reported.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment killed three terrorists after being attacked with small arms fire in eastern Mosul July 9. The 3-21st also seized a number of weapons from the vehicle of the terrorists.

Soldiers from the 3-21st also detained five individuals suspected of terrorist activity during two separate operations in Mosul July 7. Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment detained two individuals suspected of terrorist activity during a cordon and search operation southwest of Mosul July 7. While patrolling in western Mosul, Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment detained one individual for violating curfew July 9.

Coalition Soldiers discovered a weapons and munitions cache during a search operation south of Mosul July 7.

Police, Soldiers care for injured

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Police officers and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers responded to a car bomb attack late July 10 against a mosque in south Baghdad by securing the area around the shrine and evacuating injured worshippers to a local hospital.

The blast injured 15 people, including at least one child. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Iraqi Security Forces / In Brief

Iraqi soldiers tipped off by Iraqi contractor

BAGHDAD, Iraq – An Iraqi man pointed out the location of a weapons cache to Iraqi Army soldiers Thursday in Baghdad, according to a multinational forces report.

A local contractor working for the Iraqi Army tipped off the headquarters of the 1st Brigade, 1st Division Iraqi Intervention Force to the weapons cache. The man was cleaning up an area in a suburb of Baghdad on July 14, when he stumbled onto the cache. Iraqi soldiers searching the site confiscated 5 Rocket Propelled Grenades with extra motors, an armored vest, ski masks, hand held radios, bullets and hand grenades. (MNSTC-I Public Affairs)

Iraqi Police detain high-value targets

MOSUL, Iraq – Iraqi Police captured the leader of an insurgent cell known for beheadings and another high-value target while conducting a cordon and search mission July 11, according to a multinational forces report. At the time of the cell leader's capture, he was dressed in women's clothing. (MNSTC-I Public Affairs)

Suicide bomber captured, attack thwarted

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Security Forces and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers wounded and captured a suicide bomber before he could blow himself up near a Coalition checkpoint in central Baghdad.

"The actions of the Iraqi Police on the scene prevented an act of terrorism in Baghdad today along with the deaths of innocent Iraqi people," said Col. Ed Cardon, 4th Brigade Combat Team commander.

Two bombers approached the checkpoint shortly before 9 a.m. after a car bomb exploded near the same checkpoint. Initially, the two suicide bombers were in front of the car that exploded, then began walking toward the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army Soldiers who were responding to the car bomb. U.S. military officials say they suspect the two bombers might have been targeting the first responders to the car-bomb attack.

One suicide bomber was shot by an IA Soldier and, as the bomber fell to the ground, his explosives detonated.

The second suicide bomber was wounded by shrapnel from that explosion.

"The IA Soldiers were about to pick him up and treat him like one of the wounded but then they noticed that he was wearing a suicide vest," said Maj. Alayne Conway, 4th Brigade Combat Team spokesperson.

An Iraqi Explosive Ordnance Detonation team was able to disarm the vest rendering the area safe and preventing further casualties.

Four local Iraqi citizens were wounded. Iraqi Security Forces evacuated the injured civilians to a local hospital for treatment.

"Once again, improved security measures are working. The Iraqi police and Iraqi EOD team performed their jobs well. These suicide bombers failed in their mission while the police succeeded in theirs," said Cardon. "I am in awe of the bravery of the Iraqi EOD specialist that disarmed the vest on the wounded suicide bomber at great risk to his own life."

The wounded bomber, paralyzed by bomb shrapnel and the IP gunfire, was taken to the 86th Combat Support Hospital in the International Zone where he remains in critical condition.

Four local Iraqi citizens were also wounded in the terrorist attack and were evacuated to a local hospital for treatment. (Task Force Baghdad Public Affairs)

Commandos capture insurgents in Mosul hotels

MOSUL, Iraq – Iraqi Police Commandos and Coalition Forces acting on intelligence tips raided several Mosul hotels Tuesday and detained numerous suspected insurgents planning attacks in Iraq, according to multinational reports.

Iraqi Police Commandos, from the Third Commando Brigade, and U.S. Soldiers from A Company 1-24 Infantry Regiment conducted raids on four separate hotels in the city July 12. A total of 11 insurgents were detained during the daylight operation. Several of the detained men, claiming to be from Baghdad, stated they were in Mosul to purchase unknown equipment for their cell. (MNSTC-I Public Affairs)

Operation Lightning continues, attacks down

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Iraqi forces continue their assault on enemy forces in Operation Al Barkh (Lightning), with officials noting a 10 percent reduction in attacks on Iraqi and Coalition troops in the past week, according to a July 11 multinational forces report.

In the same time frame, forces with the Iraqi Army's 6th Division have captured eight suspected insurgents – seven identified as Egyptian and one Indian; dismantled two terrorist cells; recovered a dump truck modified to serve as a mobile rocket launcher and a van set up as a sniper firing platform similar to the one used by the D.C. Sniper. (MNSTC-I Public Affairs)